

**The Florida Transit Maintenance Consortium  
Regular Quarterly Meeting  
May 16, 2007**

**CALL TO ORDER** The regular quarterly meeting of the Florida Transit Maintenance Consortium (FTMC) was called to order at 9:20 A.M., Wednesday, May 16, 2007, in the Board Room at CUTR. The presiding officer was Ed Bart. A quorum was present, including the following:

**PRESENT:**

Bobby Westbrook, FDOT  
Liz Stutts, FDOT  
Joe Cheney, Lynx  
Paul Starling, RTS  
Rick Kazawitch, VORAN  
Robert Andis, HART  
Randy Brewer, JTA  
Terry Posey, JTA  
Glen Goddard, Citrus Connection  
Ed Bart, CUTR  
Hank Cusack, CUTR  
Lisa Staes, CUTR  
Raj Chaudary, CUTR  
Vicki Zambito, CUTR

**Welcome & Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Ed Bart.

The input from the maintenance managers is valuable because of the impact it has state wide. The managers direct the activities of the FMTP and what we do, to a certain extent, on vehicle procurement, and other issues as we move forward with the different programs.

**Appointment of Interim Chair**

The process for getting tasks done needs to be formalized, not the actual meeting, the way information is recorded.

Ed Bart was nominated as Interim Chair for today's meeting only. Joe Cheney motioned and seconded by Bob Andis. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes from Feb. 23, 2007**

Joe Cheney moved and Bob Andis seconded to approve the minutes as written from February 13, 2007 meeting. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously

## **Apprenticeship Program Update**

Ed Bart received a directive from Bob Westbrook and Liz Stutts requesting that the FMTP program go in a different direction.

The current option is at the discretion of the Consortium.

The FDOT lobbied the FPTA and they have agreed to provide \$50K for scholarships for technicians in the apprenticeship program.

A copy of the presentation slides and handouts is attached.

Q: Is there a minimum age for pre-apprenticeship?

A: Whatever the Consortium sets. To get into the apprenticeship program, by DOL standards, is 18. Pre-apprenticeship goes is generally from the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> years of high school. Students in Florida high schools now have to declare a major before graduation.

If the program gets registered, it becomes an authorized VA program. People coming back from Iraqi, with GI benefits they want to become a technician, enroll in the program and start drawing down on the GI bill. They have an opportunity to learn a trade, get skills in the four years as an apprentice.

Example:

A technician goes through four years apprenticeship program will get a DOE certificate. He can register at Hillsborough Community College for the AAS in Industrial Management/Transit Technician program. The courses can be taken online if he is out of the area.

This is a 60 hour AS degree, two years of college. If he gets the DOE certificate the college will wave 27 credit hours based on the program. The remaining hours he takes on line, with a variety of basic subjects such as: Public Speaking and Basic Math.

Hurdles – See attached examples. This will be set up by the FMTC.

Union involvement – They need to be part of the Apprenticeship Council. There are union technicians (SME) are involved in the development of the training modules. They are involved in helping set the procedures for delivering the training. There main concern is wage progression which is part of the Apprenticeship Program.

Q: Joe Cheney: Does there have to be a consistency in program agreements?

A: The consistency on OJT and related instruction; Yes. What's open for flexibility is they way techs move through the program and how the program is structured, to include wage progression.

Q: Joe Cheney: "The areas I get the most concerned with is legal. Substance is one of the most difficult stumbling points. When someone does not perform or chooses not to perform, retaining them in the program comes into question. There becomes a dividing point between union and management for the program.

A: That's important and is precisely one of the reasons why the Union has to be involved in the Advisory council. The handouts are excerpts from the program as it is written now. The program needs ions in the selection criteria, how to meet affirmative action goals, handling disputes, handling someone not making progress, how they defer up to the council, what happens when they get out of the program. These are all the things the committee must help provide. The basic outline allows for a situation like those mentioned.

Q: Joe Cheney: Wage progression: how is that done? Why at state level?

A: That's exactly why we powered down the wage structure. Some properties may have someone whose doesn't have a contract. That property sets that wage rate they way they choose. The rate gets worked out with the union. Everybody's contract is different. The manager may take the program to the property and reopen the wage based on school year and possibly come up with a new wage scale. The only restriction is 35% minimum for at the start and at least 75% of a journeyman's wage when they exit the program.

Q: Joe Cheney: How do you integrate experienced technicians into the program? Can time be waived?

A: Yes. It will be up to the consortium to determine how much time is waved. Do you want a master technician to just get a DOE certificate without going through the training? Once the program is registered, you have a one time shot at getting the technician in. After that you can only wait two years. If you started today, and you have a master technician who wants to get into the program it doesn't matter if he has 20 years at your property.

A lot of the program can be changed. There are certain requirements at the Federal level that must be met. The Affirmative Action piece must be dealt with.

Q: How is the program different from ASE or Keystone?

A: They are interested in coming in to make money to train people. The Consortium in the FMTP has been training technicians in Florida for the last 17 years. The modules are developed specifically to the vehicles in Florida. No one can do it better than the SMEs from the properties. With

this program you get a DOE certificate that is recognized nationwide, a two year degree AAS program that no one is offering. The apprenticeship program is in all 50 states. The GI bill can be used for our program. It's up to the FTMC whether the ASE is included.

Q: What happens if you have person that comes into the program who is never going to be able to achieve the master level? He is just not proficient in some of the areas. What if after four years he still has two areas to complete. What is the cut off?

A: The Advisory Council meets and decides what to do with him. The provisions are in the contract. It's the FTMC's program. You will create the coming in and going out anyway you want it to happen. However, there has to be an appeals process.

It's critical to get registered, passing motions, and the meetings formally recorded. This is based on whatever the FTMC wants to see.

Q: Is there a re-certification (three or four years) after someone completes the program?

A: That's up to the FTMC. Initially most apprenticeship programs, there is no re-certification. They have add -on master apprenticeship or something similar.

Q: Is it possible to have a standards or something to determine if the technician is performing properly?

A: The apprenticeship program trains people for 2,000 hours a year of OJT. The maintenance director signs off on the hours. The managers are capable of assessing the technician's performance.

Q: Joe Cheney suggested that perhaps an appeals process at the local level (HR, Union) should be considered. He is concerned about a third party review.

A: Someone is brought into and released from the program based on technical aspects, not because he didn't show up on time or preventable accidents, etc. The technician will be release because he/she can't perform.

A contract is signed by the apprentice. There are three parties that are contracted, apprentice, sponsor (FTMC), and the property. They understand what the rules are before they begin the program.

Q: Something needs to be added to the selection process... If this person isn't going to make it for whatever reason, and is no longer wanted in the

program, but he is still an employee of the property. Basically they went through the selection process of this group or advisory council got put on at the property, he is left with the property that the program doesn't want anymore. The Union has to say "We didn't ask for him but now we have to as a union representative and as a company have to decide what to do with him."

A: That concern is written into the program. The actual agreement is between the FTMC and the property. The selection committee uses criteria to bring somebody in and it may be that the criteria to be at the property. The property would send the names to the committee. There is a chance that the program may be full and your guys won't be able to attend.

It was suggested that the agreement should be written in a manner to where when he agrees to hire an employee, it's with the understanding that the employee must meet the criteria and complete the program. If he is unable to do that, your obligation to him is released as well.

Q: What happens to the technician that has issues with the agency outside the program?

A: That is a completely separate issue between the technician and the agency. If he gets is released from the agency then he is no longer in the program.

Q: Are they going to be able to start their HCC classes while they are in for four years?

A: They may be able to attend HCC.

Q: If someone gets kicked out of the program are they obligated to pay the program back?

A: The committee will have to decide that.

The program standards are the program and explain the whole process. This is a basic program at this point. The group was asked to review it and forward comments to Ed Bart by June 30.

The Advisory Council will be selected at the next meeting.

Q: How are the SME/Trainers going to be handled as far as the program is concerned?

A: The Advisory Council will need to work that out. The Council will write the application process and criteria. There may be a piece included that will grandfather in certain people that have a level that meets a certain criteria.

Joe Cheney, Lynx, motioned to continue to proceed forward with the Apprenticeship Program as discussed. Seconded by Glen Goddard, LAMTD. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously

### **Election of Officers**

The Chair will run the meeting and create the bylaws for the FTMC. The bylaws will determine what constitutes a quorum. All of the bylaws will be voted on by the FTMC. A quorum is needed to pass motions, consists of either the majority of people present or a certain set number.

Joe Cheney motioned to set aside the election of the Chair till the next meeting, and continue with Ed Bart as interim until that time and was seconded by Bob Andis. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Ed Bart motioned that Vicki Zambito serve as Secretary and was seconded by Joe Cheney. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously

Ed Bart motioned that Raj Chaudhary as Recording Secretary and was seconded by Joe Cheney. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously

### **Old Business/New Business**

No discussion.

### **Next Meeting**

Tentatively set for second week of July.

Motion to adjourn – Joe Cheney and seconded by Bob Andis. There was no further discussion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously

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Recording Secretary

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Program Manager